

the other side—"practically dead," "good for nothing," land has appreciated all over the State. I hope it will long continue to do so, and I shall be as much delighted as the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) to know that there is not an acre of land in this State but what can be profitably farmed under a better system of labor than we have had before, and be worth double for farming purposes on that account. But then the fact has been such as I have stated, and I do not know that it has ever materially changed except in the convulsions of time.

But in Charles county—which has a larger percentage of slaves than Prince George's—in Charles county, the land, according to the same returns, is found to be worth \$19 58 an acre. The larger the proportion of slaves the smaller the value of the land. But I do not propose to dwell upon these statistics, for they are tedious at all times. I wish merely to add that in those four counties as well as the other great slaveholding county, Montgomery, in the full enjoyment of all the blessings of slavery, the progress of white population during seventy years has been backward, and the census of 1860 found within them fewer white persons than that of 1790, as shown by the tables.

WHITE POPULATION.

Counties.	1790.	1860.
Prince George's.....	10,004	9,650
Calvert.....	4,211	3,997
St. Mary's.....	8,216	6,798
Charles.....	10,124	5,796
Montgomery.....	11,679	11,349

I have a theory with reference to the barrenness which is referred to. I wish to say that wherever you find the land cultivated by slave labor for a considerable length of time, you will find plenty of the barrenness of which the gentleman from Prince George's (Mr. Clarke) spoke. Look over your State. Look, too, at Virginia as she was four years ago, not as she is to-day, when the besom of desolation has swept over her. Think of her having started upon the race of empire more than two hundred and fifty years ago, and now see her progress. One solitary ruined steeple marks where Jamestown once stood. And if gentleman have visited there, as I have done, they will remember that all over eastern Virginia, the most noticeable feature in the landscape is the old chimney from which has rotted away the mansion of some "first family," who once resided there. I have stood upon a single spot, and counted in the broad sweep which my eye could take—not in the town, but in the country—more than twenty-five chimneys visible, thus standing; and desolation visible everywhere. What is it that has written barrenness over all those fields? Why is it? Look at recent events. Why is it that within the sound of cannon from the old town of Falmouth, on

the Rappahannock, and straight on the road to Richmond, the capital of Virginia, whole army corps can play at hide and seek for a week at a time in the tangled jungle there, appropriately called "the Wilderness?" Why is it? Massachusetts, one-eighth the size of the Old Dominion, poor, sterile, rocky, sandy, frozen Massachusetts, that for the life of her could not raise enough upon her own soil to maintain the population there, has more white people living within her borders than Old Virginia has, though eight times her size. It is because a system of labor exists there such as has not existed in Virginia.

And I wish to make a slight digression here for the purpose of saying one word about Massachusetts. It is not in this question; she is not on trial here. We are trying to arrive at the truth for Maryland. But I think it due to those who may casually take up our debates in future times, that one word should be said in reference to Massachusetts upon one point.

The statement has been made, and re-made, and re-made, after Mr. Ruffin, the famous Virginia Ruffin, that when convinced that slavery was too costly in their wintry region, Massachusetts and other Northern States, first sold their negro slaves to the South, and then abolished slavery; that while avoiding their costly use, they continued as long as permitted by law, to steal new slaves from Africa and sell them to the Southern States, &c. That was uttered by Mr. Ruffin. It is due to him to say that he did not originate it. And it was caught up and echoed in Congress, and by little men all over the land, as though it was true. It is the most notable example I know of the truth of that old maxim—that a lie well stuck to is as good as the truth. It has been reiterated here by gentlemen who believed in it, no doubt, but it is entirely false. I ask any of those gentlemen, if he has examined the statistics by which he would prove that assertion? I say the fact is that slavery never had a legal existence in Massachusetts. In several of the other Northern States it did exist in some slight degree.

Mr. BERRY, of Prince George's. Do I understand the gentleman to say that slavery never had any existence in that State?

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. No legal existence.

Mr. BERRY, of Prince George's. It existed under the common law.

Mr. STOCKBRIDGE. No, sir; *never*. The common law recognizes no such thing as slavery. And I will refer gentlemen to a case in Virginia that decides that expressly.

Mr. CLARKE. That question was fully argued by Mr. Benjamin, in the Senate of the United States. And I think he completely establishes the fact of the recognition of slavery by the common law of England. And I think it was so acknowledged by Mr. Fessenden.